

SCOTTISH OIL STORAGE REGULATIONS

Updated advice on storing oil in Scotland

Oil pollution can have a devastating effect on the water environment: it kills animals and insects, prevents photosynthesis of plants and disrupts the food chain, requiring a long period of recovery. Every year in Scotland there are hundreds of recorded water pollution incidents caused by oil, many of which are due to poor storage. The Water Environment (Oil Storage) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 were issued to improve oil storage and thereby reduce the risk of such pollution. **The deadline to comply with the regulations is 1 April 2010.**

Who the regulations affect

Businesses and members of the public will be regulated if they store petrol, diesel, mineral oil, heating oil, lubricating oil, waste oil, vegetable oil or plant oil. A wide range of premises is covered by the regulations, including industrial businesses, commercial businesses, institutions (residential and non-residential) and farms.

The regulations do not apply to domestic oil tanks with a capacity of less than 2,500 litres.

What the regulations require

The regulations set design standards for above ground oil storage devices including fixed tanks, intermediate bulk containers, drums and mobile bowsers.

The main requirements are:

- The container must be strong enough to hold the oil without leaking or bursting.
- The container must be positioned to avoid damage as far as is reasonably practicable.
- A secondary containment system such as a bund (a man-made embankment or dam) or drip tray must be provided to catch any oil leaking from the container or its ancillary pipe work and equipment.
- The secondary containment system must have sufficient capacity to contain at least 110% of the maximum contents of the container. If more than one container is stored, the bund should be capable of storing at least 110% of the largest tank or 25% of the total storage capacity, whichever is the greater (in the case of drums the capability should be at least 25% of total storage capacity).
- Oil stored in mobile bowsers must also be banded.
- Bund base and walls must be impermeable to water and oil and checked regularly for leaks.
- Any valve, filter, sight gauge, vent pipe or other ancillary equipment must be kept within the bund when not in use.
- Above-ground pipe work must be properly supported.
- Below-ground pipe work must be protected from physical damage and have adequate leak detection. If mechanical joints have to be used, they should be readily accessible for inspection.

The full requirements are specified in the regulations at:
www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2006/20060133.htm

Domestic oil storage

Existing domestic tanks with a capacity greater than 2,500 litres must comply with the regulations.

Existing domestic oil tanks with a capacity of less than 2,500 litres are not subject to the regulations, while new and replacement single domestic oil storage tanks of less than 2,500 litres are covered by The Building Regulations (Scotland) 2004, which require a risk assessment to determine the need for secondary containment.

For the purposes of these regulations:

- Holiday homes and bed and breakfast establishments where the owner lives on the property are regarded as domestic premises.
- An office within a house would still be exempt providing the building is used wholly or mainly as a private dwelling.
- Residential care homes are not exempt from the regulations because they are not used wholly or mainly as a private dwelling.

Exemptions

Some substances and activities are exempt from the regulations:

- Uncut bitumen.
- Storage of oil in vehicles.
- The storage of oil in any container situated wholly underground (unless situated within a building underground).
- Premises used for the onward distribution of oil to other places, such as oil distribution depots. This includes sites where operations such as blending and filling are carried out, but does not include fuel installations for transport companies.
- Where oil is stored in accordance with:
 - an authorisation under Part 1 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in respect of a Part A process falling within the description set out in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Protection (Prescribed Processes and Substances) Regulations 1991;
 - a permit under the Pollution Prevention and Control (Scotland) Regulations 2000 in respect of a Part A activity as defined in Schedule 1 to those regulations.

Enforcement

Our main aims are to protect Scotland's environment and to ensure people comply with existing legislation. It is the responsibility of the storage tank owner to ensure the tank complies fully with the regulations by 1 April 2010. Anyone buying or leasing a property should ensure the oil storage facilities comply with the regulations.

Further information on the regulations and how they affect businesses and the general public is available on our website at:
www.sepa.org.uk/water/regulations/regimes/pollution_control/oil_storage.aspx

Further information

For further advice and guidance please contact your local SEPA office or our 24 hour Communications Centre on 01738 448414, where staff will be able to advise fully on the regulations.

Oil storage regulations FAQ

Answers to frequently asked questions on the Water Environment (Oil Storage) (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_regulation/regimes/pollution_control/oil_storage/oil_storage_regulations_faq.aspx

NetRegs

Provides free environmental guidance for small businesses in the UK including guidance on oil storage.

www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/63229.aspx

Scottish Government guidance note on oil storage regulations

Guidance note on the key requirements of the regulations and 'best practice' measures.

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/1057/0029448.pdf

Information on types of tank for oil storage

Definitions of different types of storage.

www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_regulation/regimes/pollution_control/oil_storage/types_of_tank_for_storage.aspx

Building regulations – combustion appliances and fuel storage systems

Information on Scottish Building Standards website relating to installation of combustion appliances and fuel storage systems.

www.sbsa.gov.uk

Code of practice for installers, owners and operators of underground storage tanks (and pipelines)

Practical guidance to the owners and operators of underground liquid hydrocarbon storage tanks and pipelines in order to minimise the risks to the water environment.

www.sepa.org.uk/water/water_regulation/regimes/pollution_control/idoc.ashx?docid=4d05ba7a-8a91-4672-8687-760c95e23678&version=-1

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